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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Erik D'Hondt 16 April 2001
Int'l. App. No.: PCT/EP99/07765 Group Art Unit: Not Yet Assigned
Int'l. Filing Date: 08 October 1999 Examiner: Not Yet Assigned
For: HEPATITIS A VACCINES

Assistant Commissioner of Patents
Box: PCT
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Preliminary to the examination of this application, applicants respectfully request amendment of the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-16.

Please add new claims 17-40.

- A ✓ 17. A process for the production of inactivated Hepatitis A virus substantially free of host cell contamination, the process comprising:
- a) a culturing Hepatitis A virus and harvesting a hepatitis A preparation;
 - b) treating said hepatitis A preparation with a protease, thereafter;
 - c) separating intact virus from protease-digested protein; and
 - d) inactivating said virus.
18. A process as claimed in claim 17, wherein the Hepatitis A virus is derived from HM-175 strain.
19. A process as claimed in claim 17, wherein the protease is trypsin.